



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**CONSORTIUM IS “PUBLIC HEALTH READY”
One of Seven Agencies Honored in U.S. for Preparedness Efforts**

Wauwatosa, WIS. – The Milwaukee/Waukesha County Consortium for Emergency Public Health Preparedness was recognized by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) for being ready to handle large scale public health emergencies.

The consortium, which consists of 14 public health agencies in Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties, submitted an application and received honors through the Project Public Health Ready initiative that NACCHO is conducting with support from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The consortium won the award because it effectively demonstrated that member agencies are prepared to work collaboratively to handle bioterrorism events, new epidemics, natural disasters and other public health related emergencies, which was accomplished by drafting a comprehensive preparedness plan, developing a competent workforce to handle public health crises, and conducting preparedness exercises and other complex simulated drills.

Carol Wantuch, chair of the consortium and head of Cudahy's Public Health department, said, “This honor is exceedingly well deserved. It reflects the tremendous effort, dedication, creativity and cooperation that our entire team of consortium experts demonstrated to ensure that public health professionals across jurisdictional boundaries are ready to assist residents in a time of need.”

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CONSORTIUM IS 'PUBLIC HEALTH READY' *continued...*

“Public health emergencies do not stop as you leave one community and enter another, which is why consortium members have been committed to developing an effective emergency response plan to cover the metropolitan area,” announced Jennifer Stohler, consortium program coordinator. “Residents living in Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties should be proud of their local public health department for participating in the consortium and its preparedness activities.”

Other public health agencies that also received recognition from NACCHO for their efforts include: Benton Harbor, Michigan; Bowling Green, Kentucky; Cambridge, Massachusetts; Flagstaff, Arizona; Hartford, Connecticut; and Tompkinsville, Kentucky. In addition to the consortium, organizations in Connecticut, Kentucky and Massachusetts also serve regions that cross county lines. The others serve a single town or city.

“Each of these departments is a model of public health preparedness,” stated NACCHO’s executive director Patrick Libbey. “The seven departments have shown exemplary leadership and multi-pronged achievement in the hard work of emergency preparedness.”

In the last three years, only 42 local departments or regional partnerships across the nation have received recognition from NACCHO for being ready to handle public health emergencies. Currently, there are approximately 3,000 public health departments operating in the United States.

For more information about the consortium or the recognition that it received, please call Jennifer Stohler at (414) 479-3577. Additional information about the Project Public Health Ready initiative can be found on-line at:
www.naccho.org/topics/emergency/pphr.cgf.

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